



The effects of risk factors and protective factors on influencing engagement in risky behaviours and injury experiences for high-risk adolescents

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Presentation overview

- High-risk adolescents
- Jessor's Problem Behavior Framework
- Risk factors and protective factors
- Methodology
- Results
- Summary of findings
- Limitations and future directions

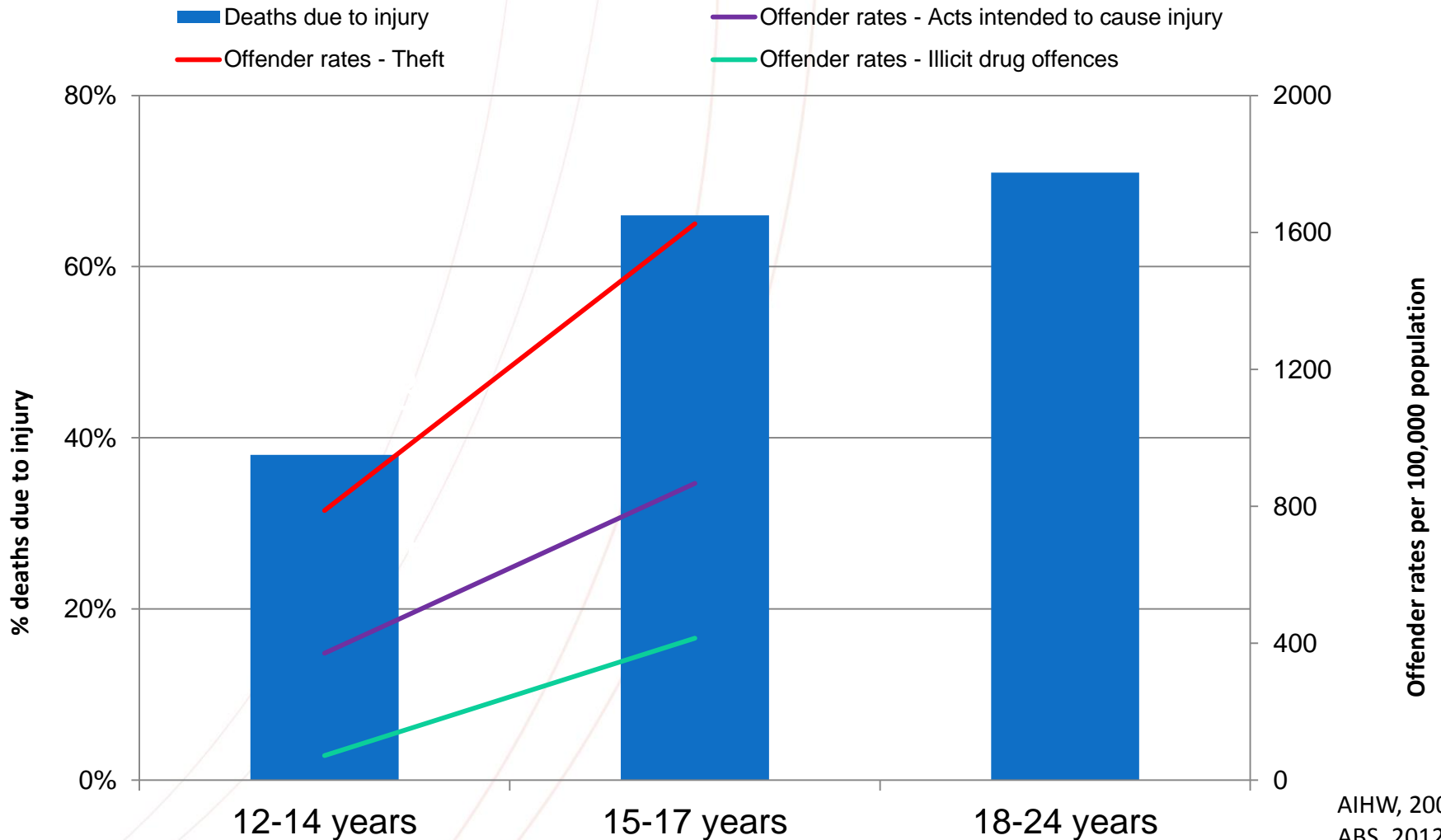
High-risk adolescents

- High-risk adolescents are at increased risk of harm when compared with non high-risk adolescents
- There is a need to understand more about the factors that increase or decrease the likelihood of high-risk adolescents to engage in risk taking behaviours
- Conceptually difficult to define

Defining high-risk adolescents

- Participants were classified as high-risk during post-hoc analyses if they had reported seeking medical treatment for one or more injury during the preceding 6 month period

Why early intervention is important for high-risk adolescents



AIHW, 2008
ABS, 2012

Jessor's Problem Behavior Framework

- A leading psychosocial explanatory model of adolescent behaviour, emphasising psychosocial risk factors and protective factors (Jessor et al., 1993; Jessor, Donovan & Costa, 1991; Jessor & Jessor, 1977; Jessor et al., 1968)
- Constructs of protection and risk have been reformulated several times:
 - Tobacco use (Costa et al., 2007)
 - Health enhancing behaviours (e.g. diet & exercise) (Turbin et al., 2006)

Protective factors & risk factors

- Help articulate social contexts of adolescent life
- Have the potential to increase or decrease proneness to engage in risk taking behaviour
- Protective factors can mitigate risk factors (e.g. Lee et al., 2012)
- They can predict the probability of risk taking behaviour (e.g. Gulliver & Begg, 2007; Loeber & Farrington, 2012)

Study framework

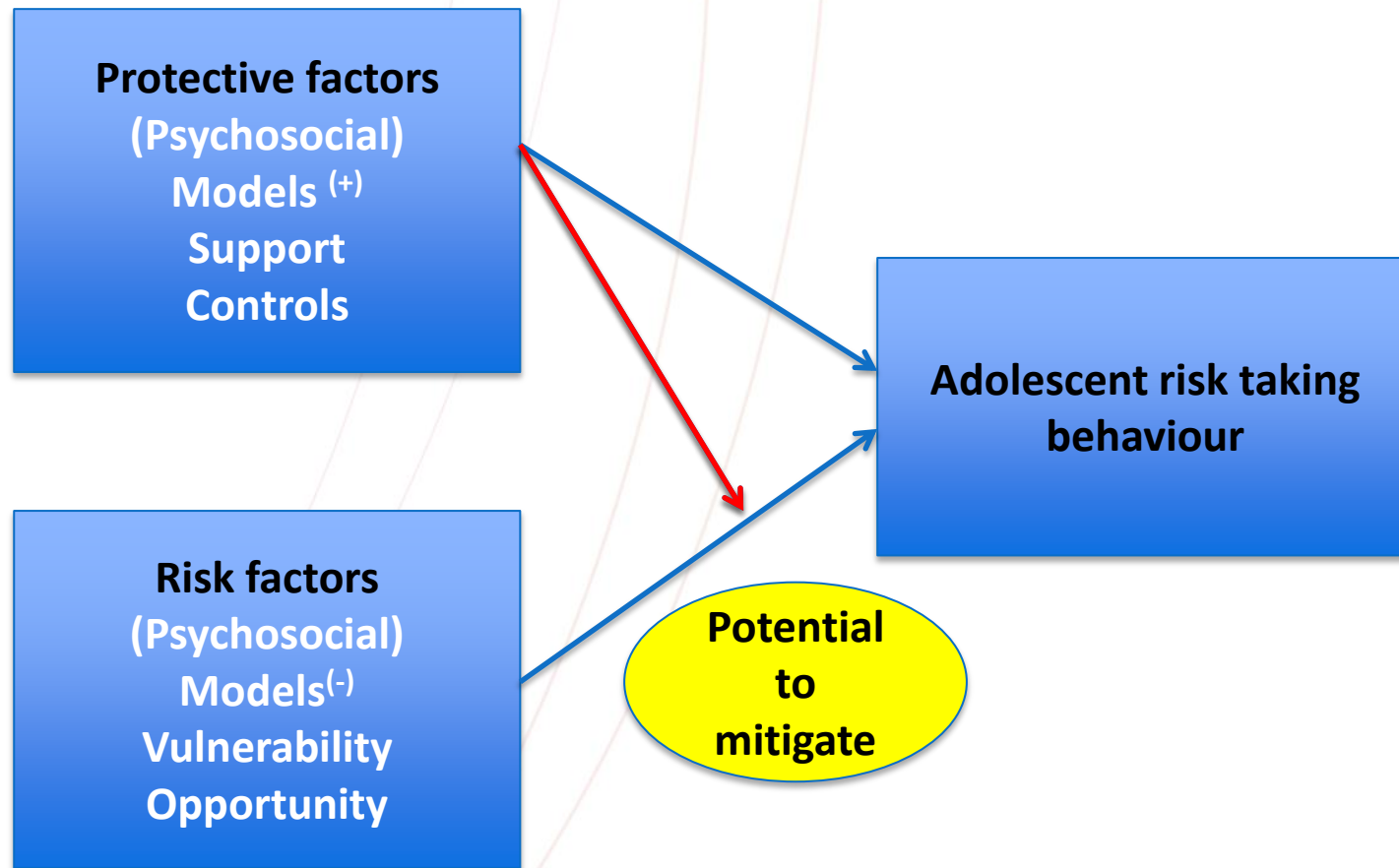


Figure 1. Protection/risk explanatory framework of variation in adolescent risk taking behaviour, adapted from Jessor et al., 1993

Research aim

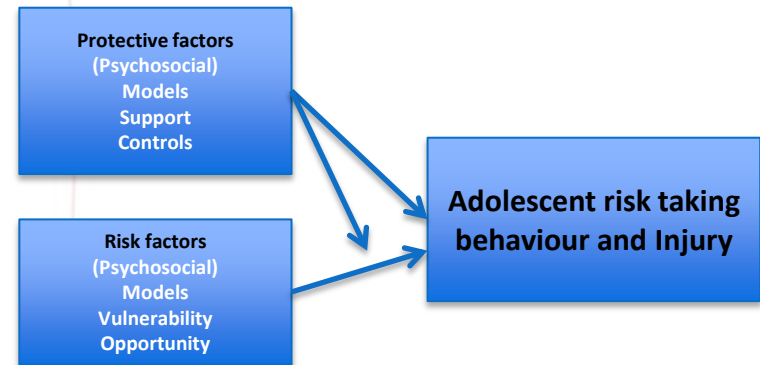
- To examine the influence of risk factors and protective factors on engaging in risky behaviours:
 - violence
 - alcohol use
 - transport risks

Participants and Procedure

- Year 9 students (N=2,521, 57% female), aged 13-14 years
- 35 high schools (23 State; 3 Catholic; 9 Independent)
- 84% response rate
- Paper based survey completed in class



Measures



Protective factors	Risk factors
MODELS (+): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents (My parents follow road rules) • Peers (My friends spend a lot of time with their families) 	MODELS(-): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents (My parents drink alcohol) • Peers (My friends have done the following in the past 3 months...)
SUPPORT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents (My parents appear to understand my problems) • School (I am treated with as much respect as other students) 	VULNERABILITY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peers (My friends would look out for me if I was injured) • Parents (My parents make me feel like I am wanted)
CONTROLS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents (I'm likely to get in trouble if...) • Peers (If a student gets caught breaking the rules the teachers or principal do something about it) 	OPPORTUNITY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived availability of alcohol (It's easy for me to get alcohol) • School (It's easy to wag school)

Blue text = Example survey items

Analyses

- Cronbach's alpha indicated good internal consistency of survey items
- Logistic regression assessed the contribution of risk factors and protective factors on risk taking behaviours

Results: Predictors of risky behaviour

High-risk adolescents	Range	95% CI Odds Ratio
Protective factor: <i>Models-Peers</i>	.642-.880	.752

= 13%
lower
odds

Non high-risk adolescents		
Protective factor: <i>Models-Peers</i>	.652-.815	.729
Protective factor: <i>Models-Parents</i>	.736-.909	.818
Protective factor: <i>Controls-Parents</i>	.830-.923	.875
Risk factor: <i>Models-Parents</i>	1.067-1.435	1.238
Risk factor: <i>Models-Peers</i>	1.240-1.364	1.300
Risk factor: <i>Opportunity-Perceived availability of alcohol</i>	1.000-1.112	1.055

Note: * $p < .05$

Findings

- Risk factors and protective factors influence engagement in risk taking behaviour differently for high-risk adolescents compared with non high-risk adolescents
- Peers play an important and protective role in influencing the risk taking behaviour of high-risk adolescents and non high-risk adolescents

Discussion

- Findings are consistent with research indicating that peer relationships can be protective for high-risk adolescents (Bender & Losel, 1997)
- Risk factors and protective factors do not influence adolescents uniformly across delinquency levels (Stouthamer-Loeber, et al., 1993)
- The results may differ with population not in mainstream schooling (e.g. Flexible learning)

Implications for interventions aimed at high-risk adolescents

- Risk factors and protective factors have a lack of significant influence for this population
- Utilise the protective influence of positive peer relationships
- 13-14 years of age is an opportune time to intervene before maladaptive patterns manifest into offending behaviours

Limitations and future directions

- Self-report nature of data
- Future directions: Examine the effects of risk factors and protective factors after implementation of a school based intervention

Questions?

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